



Testimony submitted to the Education Committee on S.B. 948, An Act Addressing Education Funding and Racial Equity in Connecticut

March 3, 2021

Co-Chairs Senator McCrory and Representative Sanchez, Ranking Members Senator Berthel and Representative McCarty, and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

My name is Alisha Price and I am from Norwalk, Connecticut.

I'm asking you to **support S.B. 948**, An Act Addressing Education Funding and Racial Equity in Connecticut because it will:

- Send millions of dollars to schools that serve Black, Brown, and low-income students.
- Make funding more equitable by reflecting the learning needs of English language learners and children in communities with concentrated poverty.
- Fund all public schools through a needs-based formula that includes magnets, charters, and vocational-technical schools without taking money away from traditional schools.
- Eliminate the phase-in and fully fund ECS. Under current law, a second-grader will be in high school before they receive their full funding.

Right now, our state's education funding system is racist and classist. We spend more on educating affluent white children than low-income children and children of color. Then we spend even more to police, prosecute, and incarcerate those who are failed by our education system. I'm asking you to help make Connecticut a more just and equitable place to live.

My story is not unique, but it is troubling.

As a veteran educator with over twenty-three years of teaching experience in Bridgeport the inequity in educational funding has consistently plagued my students and colleagues for decades. Teaching for me has been rewarding, heart-breaking, and frustrating due to the disparities that have occurred since I've started teaching and unfortunately after two decades, still persist today. Although there have been many moments to celebrate throughout the years, there has been so much more to cause angst and outrage.

The first, negative impact of educational funding inequity has resulted in a lack of resources for students and teachers. For example, there were countless times when I did not have enough



textbooks, novels, and even photocopy paper which resulted in students being disengaged with their learning and hampering instruction.

Additional ramifications of underfunding has resulted in students not being afforded opportunities and access. For instance, there were numerous times when there were not enough computers for each student to use. Consequently, this inability to access technology has exacerbated the digital divide amongst my students and their suburban counterparts.

Last, classroom size is a direct repercussion of the inequity that persists in education funding in Bridgeport. During my tenure, I have had to cope with over-crowded classrooms that made instructing and learning a herculean task. Resulting in students not getting the attention or resources that they needed to fully reach their potential.

As a teacher, a concerned citizen, tax payer, and voter, I implore you to take action and fund this bill to ensure that every student in Connecticut has the opportunity to access fully-funding high quality education.

Please vote “Yes” on S.B. 948 and support its passage in the General Assembly so that our state’s budget reflects the values of justice and equity in education.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and leadership on this issue.

Alisha Price

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